

**Appln. No.: 10/649,505**  
**Amdt. dated May 3, 2005**  
**Reply to Office action of February 23, 2005**

**REMARKS**

Claim 1, 3-11 and 13 remain in the application.

The claims have been amended to clearly distinguish over the references by independent claims 1 and 13 reciting that the tongue has a wider dimension than the groove to provide an interference fit to compress the forks together as the tongue is inserted into frictional engagement with the groove to narrow the slot from top to bottom to retain the tongue in the groove. This is in contradistinction to the Kajiwara '341 patent which merely discloses a snap-together connection between two boards in a floor. More specifically, the Kajiwara '341 patent discloses locking surfaces or catches 36 in the groove to retain male projections or tangs 28 as the tongue is inserted into the groove. In the subject invention, the tongue is larger than the groove to provide an interference fit thereby forcing the forks together as the tongue is inserted into the groove to assure a seal. There is no assurance of a seal in the Kajiwara '341 patent, just a leak able mechanical interlock.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the Application, as amended, is now presented in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully solicited. Applicant believes that no fees are due, however, if any become required, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit

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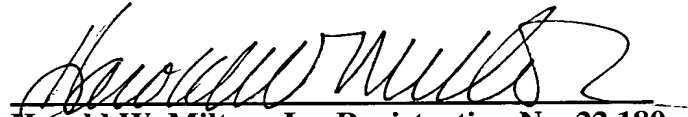
Account 08-2789. Further and favorable reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted

**HOWARD & HOWARD ATTORNEYS, P.C.**

May 3, 2005

Date

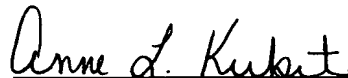


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**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that this **Amendment** for U.S. Serial No.: **10/649,505** filed **August 26, 2003** is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on **May 3, 2005**.



Anne L. Kubit